

UNCLASSIFIED

IAHRC

Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

R

PAGE 01 BUENOS 05645 01 OF 02 212206Z
ACTION ARA-14

5437

BUENOS 05645 01 OF 02 212206Z

AR151

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 10-13 HA-05 NSCE-00 SS-15 NEW-04
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 INRE-00
ICAE-00 SSO-00 /065 WO 212037Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6622

SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 5645

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, AR
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: POSSIBLE IAHRC VISIT TO ARGENTINA

1. GENERAL VIOLA, PRESIDENT VIDELA'S ALTER EGO, IS NORMALLY MY CONTACT WITH THE EXECUTIVE. BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE ON A WEEK'S VACATION, VIOLA STATED GENERAL REYNALDO BIGNONE, ARMY SECY GENERAL, WOULD BE CONTACTING ME TO UPDATE ME ON GOA PROGRESS TOWARD AN INVITATION TO IAHRC TO VISIT ARGENTINA.

2. GENERAL BIGNONE ASKED ME YESTERDAY (THURSDAY, JULY 20) TO CONFER WITH HIM AT HIS OFFICE LOCATED AT THE ARMY GENERAL COMMAND AT 1700 HOURS. WE MET ALONE. THIS BEING THE FIRST TIME WE HAD CONFERRED, BIGNONE APPEARED UNEASY, ANXIOUS BUT YET COURTEOUS. HE STARTED OUT BY SAYING THE THOUGHT OF HAVING AN OUTSIDE AGENCY FROM A FOREIGN AGENCY VISIT AN INDEPENDENT AND SOVEREIGN COUNTRY FOR INVESTIGATION PURPOSES IS SOMEWHAT REPUGNANT TO HIM, REFERRING TO A POSSIBLE VISIT BY IAHRC. HE CONTINUED SAYING THAT NO PATRIOTIC ARGENTINE CAN ACCEPT FACT OF USG QUESTIONING GOA'S MOTIVES IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS. BIGNONE RAISED HIS VOICE WHEN HE STATED ARGENTINA AND US PURSUE SAME IDEALS AND HAVE IDENTICAL IDEOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES. IN A DRAMATIC FASHION, HE LOWERED HIS VOICE AND SAID "ALL OF ARGENTINA IS HURT AND CONFUSED BY LACK OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF USG."

3. GENERAL BIGNONE RECOGNIZED HE HAD GOTTEN EMOTIONAL AND APOLOGIZED. IN AN EFFORT TO SOOTHE HIM, I TOLD BIGNONE I APPRECIATED HIS FEELINGS BUT THE TRUE TEST SHOULD BE WHETHER AN IAHRC VISIT WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF ARGENTINA. HE AGREED IT WAS TIME TO CAST BLIND NATIONALISM AND EMOTIONALISM ASIDE. HE STATED A VISIT FROM IAHRC WOULD BE POSITIVE.

4. IAHRC'S INTERROGATORY TO THE GOA'S INVITATION WAS THE NEXT SUBJECT. THERE WERE A TOTAL OF SEVEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY IAHRC TO GOA. THESE QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THIS EMBASSY IN STATE 163504 WERE GIVEN TO GENERAL VIOLA FOR HIS PRESIDENT'S CONSIDERATION. BIGNONE SAID HE HAD REVIEWED THESE QUESTIONS WITH VIDELA. HE THEN GAVE ME TENTATIVE ANSWERS TO EACH QUESTION. WE REVIEWED THEM ONE BY ONE. HE THEN AGREED TO FURNISH ME WITH A COPY OF THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. FOR THE SAKE OF BREVITY, I SHALL NOT REPEAT THE QUESTIONS HERE BUT ONLY SUBMIT ANSWERS TO ISSUES RAISED IN STATE 163504. ANSWERS FOLLOW: (A) YES; (B) IT IS SUGGESTED THIS QUESTION BE DELETED AS IT IS OFFENSIVE TO GOA; (C) YES; (D) CLARIFY WHAT IS MEANT BY: "OTHER DETENTION AND INTERROGATION SITES?" WITH REFERENCE TO "INTERVIEW PRIVATELY" IT IS CONSIDERED IT SHOULD BE IN THE PRESENCE OF WITNESSES. (E) CLARIFICATION IS NEEDED TO DETERMINE EXTENT OF QUESTION. (F) YES; (G) COMMENT: NEITHER BIGNONE NOR EMBASSY HAS COPY OF RESOLUTION CONTAINING LETTERS D? H AND I, THEREFORE, UNABLE TO GIVE ANSWER.

5. INFORMATION IN PARA FOUR IS OUR TRANSLATION OF GOA RESPONSES. SINCE THERE ARE NUANCES IN THE SPANISH VERSION IMPORTANT TO NEGOTIATING AN ACCEPTABLE INVITATION

TO THE IAHRC, THE FOLLOWING IS THE GOA SPANISH TEXT OF THE IAHRC QUESTIONS, FOLLOWED BY THE PROPOSED GOA RESPONSE, IN SPANISH.

1. ¿PODRIA LA COMISION ESPECIAL DESIGNADA PARA ATENDER ESTA INVITACION, O CUALQUIERA DE SUS MIEMBROS, ENTREVISTAR LIBRE Y PRIVADAMENTE A PERSONAS, GRUPOS, ENTIDADES E INSTITUCIONES?

SI.

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/TPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

2 IAHRC

Lot 81D208

Box 4963 (2/12)

UNCLASSIFIED

Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE 01 BUENOS 05645 02 OF 02 212211Z
ACTION ARA-14

5436

BUENOS 05645 02 OF 02 212211Z

CASTRO

INFO OCT-01 JSO-00 HA-05 NSCE-00 SS-15 HEW-04 CIAE-00
DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 INRE-00 ICAE-00
SSO-00 /052 W

-----021039 212226Z /13

O 212037Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6623

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION 2 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 5645

2. ¿ESTARIA DISPUESTO EL GOBIERNO ARGENTINO A OTORGAR LAS GARANTIAS PERTINENTES A TODOS LOS QUE SUMINISTREN INFORMACION, TESTIMONIOS O PRUEBAS DE CUALQUIER CARACTER?

SE SUGIERE SUPRIMIR ESTA PREGUNTA POR SER LESIVA AL GOBIERNO ARGENTINO.

3. ¿PODRIAN LOS MIEMBROS DE LA COMISION ESPECIAL VIAJAR LIBREMENTE POR TODO EL TERRITORIO DEL PAIS CONTANDO PARA ELLO CON LA DOCUMENTACION OFICIAL DEL GOBIERNO QUE LOS IDENTIFIQUE?

SI.

4. ¿PODRIAN TENER LOS MIEMBROS DE LA COMISION ESPECIAL ACCESO A LAS CARCELES Y TODOS LOS OTROS SITIOS DE DETENCION E INTERROGATORIO Y PODRIAN ENTREVISTAR PRIVADAMENTE A LAS PERSONAS RECLUIDAS O DE TENIDAS. ACLARAR QUE QUIEREN SIGNIFICAR POR: "OTROS SITIOS DE DETENCION E INTERROGACION."

EN CUANTO A "ENTREVISTAR PRIVADAMENTE" SE CONSIDERA QUE DEBE SER CON TESTIGOS.

5. ¿ESTARIA DISPUESTO EL GOBIERNO A PROPORCIONAR A LA COMISION ESPECIAL CUALQUIER DOCUMENTO O INFORMACION RELACIONADA CON LA OSEERVANCIA DE LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS QUE ESTA CONSIDERE NECESARIA PARA LA PREPARACION DE SU INFORME?

SE SUGIERE ACLARAR EL ALCANCE DE ESTA PREGUNTA.

6. ¿PODRIA LA COMISION ESPECIAL UTILIZAR CUALQUIER MEDIO APROPIADO PARA RECOGER, GRABAR O REPRODUCIR LA INFORMACION QUE CONSIDERE OPORTUNA?

SI.

7. ¿ESTARIA DISPUESTO EL GOBIERNO A DAR LAS GARANTIAS Y FACILIDADES A QUE SE REFIEREN LAS LETRAS D), H) E J) DE LA RESOLUCION SOBRE OBSERVACIONES "IN LOCO" ADOPTADA POR LA COMISION, CUYO TEXTO SE ENVIA ANEXO A LA PRESENTE COMUNICACION?

6. BIGNONE CONCLUDED BY SAYING HE HOPED USG COULD EXERT SOME INFLUENCE ON IAHRC EMPHASIZING FLEXIBILITY AND LESS RIGIDITY IN THEIR DEMANDS. I REMINDED HIM POSSIBLE IAHRC VISIT WAS STRICTLY A BILATERAL ISSUE. HE SMILED SAYING USG HAD INFLUENCE EVERYWHERE.

7. I THEN ASKED BIGNONE ABOUT THE NEXT STEP. HE STATED TENTATIVE ANSWERS WOULD GO TO FONOFF FOR THEIR CONSIDERATION. FONOFF IN TURN WOULD CONTACT IAHRC. I AGAIN REMINDED BIGNONE OF FONOFF'S HARDLINE ATTITUDE AND NEGATIVE APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM. I SUGGESTED INASMUCH AS TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE IT WOULD REQUIRE SOME PUSH FROM PRESIDENT VIDELA TO GET FONOFF TO MOVE. HE PROMISED ME VIDELA WOULD DO SOME PUSHING.

UNCLASSIFIED